

# Herefordshire

## Personal Details:

**Name:** Mr John Coleman

**Email:** [REDACTED]

**Postcode:** [REDACTED]

**Organisation Name:** Officer of Herefordshire Council (District or county officer)

## Comment text:

**Related subject:** I am providing Herefordshire Council's consultation response

The Council welcomes the Commissions initial conclusion to retain the current council size of 53 members. This aligns closely with the Councils preferred option which is that 'Herefordshire Council retain the current council size of 53 members, requesting that the Commission focus on making boundary adjustments to ensure electoral fairness is maintained in areas showing an electoral imbalance of more than 10% from the average ratio for that authority. Our full submission has been uploaded as a PDF file

## Attached Documents:

- initial-consultation-response.pdf



**Herefordshire Council's initial consultation response to:** The LGBCE (the Commission)  
Electoral Review of Herefordshire Council Electoral Arrangements.

**Background:** Formal submissions have been provided by Herefordshire Council to the Commission between May and October 2025 which included:

- The development and submission of the [Herefordshire Council Size](#) document, and
- A formal [council decision](#) requesting that the Commission carry out a single member ward review. This requests that the Commission aims to draw up a pattern of electoral wards where each ward is represented by one councillor.

**The Commissions conclusion following initial consultation:** *The Commission concluded that Herefordshire Council needs 53 councillors to be able to operate effectively. This is the same number as it has now.*

**The Council welcomes the Commissions initial conclusion to** retain the current council size of 53 members. This aligns closely with the Councils preferred option which is that *'Herefordshire Council retain the current council size of 53 members, requesting that the Commission focus on making boundary adjustments to ensure electoral fairness is maintained in areas showing an electoral imbalance of more than 10% from the average ratio for that authority.'*

The context to offering this initial recommendation is on the basis that Herefordshire Council considered and agreed new governance arrangements in May 2022. Two additional scrutiny committees were introduced, from three to five. In addition the changes made in 2022 introduced periodical annual reviews of effectiveness of the council's constitution. Constitutional updates were introduced in October 2024 and the most recent review in May 2025, recommended no structural changes arrangements at the current time.

The Council size submission also noted the council's relatively stable position as an existing Unitary Authority (established in 1998) operating a leader and cabinet (executive) arrangement. In this regard, the council is not undergoing Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) at the current time. Executive arrangements are kept under review in line with Council Plan business. The cabinet has constitutional scope and authority given to it to update and modify its strategic leadership structures around existing and new priorities. The council is currently assessing what 'devolution' may mean for Herefordshire. No decisions have yet been made in regard to strategic mayoral authorities in the region.

**The council also welcomes the Commissions commitment to** *'endeavour to construct a uniform pattern of wholly single member wards/divisions except where that would not be the best balance of our statutory criteria of electoral equality, community identities and interests and effective and convenient local government'*

**The Council size submission recommended** *'That wherever it is possible to do so, the LGBCE retain a one-member ward electoral arrangement as a preferred option'.*

The context to offering this initial recommendation stems back Herefordshire Council request to the Commission to retain its current one member per ward arrangements. Members of the council are aware that whilst this is the council's preferred option, this does not guarantee that those arrangements will continue. However, the council remains of the view that one member per ward is the most appropriate model of local governance.

The Council notes that Herefordshire is showing 17, out of the 53 council wards (in 2025 and/or forecasted in 2031) as having a variance of greater than 10% from the forecasted average for the county by 2031. This represents just over 32% of wards in the county. The council is not seeking to influence the Commission considerations of where potential boundary adjustments may be required, at this stage.